

Personal Use of University Resources

OVERVIEW

(RCW 42.52.160)
(WAC 292-110-010)

State officers and state employees are obligated to conserve and protect state resources for the benefit of the public interest, rather than their private interests. Responsibility and accountability for the appropriate use of state resources ultimately rests with the individual state officer and state employee, or with the state officer or state employee who authorizes such use.

A University employee may not use state resources under her or his official control, direction, or custody for private benefit or gain of the employee or any other person. Resources include any person, money, or property.

NOTE: This prohibition does not apply to the use of public resources to benefit another person as part of the officer's or employee's official duties.

REPORTING VIOLATIONS

See 10.22.

RESOURCE USE

Specifically Prohibited

The following private uses of state resources are specifically prohibited:

- Any use for the purpose of conducting an outside business;
- A use for the purpose of supporting, promoting, or soliciting for an outside organization or group unless provided for by law or authorized by the University President or designee;
- Any campaign or political use;
- Commercial uses such as advertising or selling;
- Any illegal activity.

Qualifications

Use of state resources pursuant to requirements in this section is subject to the following qualifications and limitations:

- A University employee may not use state resources for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of a person to an office or for the promotion of or opposition to a ballot proposition. Such a use of University resources is not authorized by this rule and is specifically prohibited by RCW 42.52.180, subject to the exceptions in RCW 42.52.180(2).
- A University employee may not make private use of any state property which has been removed from state facilities or other official duty stations, even if there is no cost to the state.

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Qualifications (cont.)

- A University employee may not make private use of any state property which is consumable such as paper, envelopes or spare parts, even if the actual cost to the state is de minimis.
- A University employee may not make private use of University computers or other computer-related equipment. This requirement applies to private use at any time, i.e., during work hours and during nonwork hours, and includes, but is not limited to:

Accessing computer networks or databases;

Sending or receiving electronic mail;

Accessing electronic bulletin boards;

Accessing Internet web pages for any use unrelated to official University purposes;

Any other use unrelated to official University purposes.

EXCEPTION: A University employee may use electronic mail for occasional or limited private use if the use conforms to standards in this section (20.37) and the Electronic Publishing Policy, *Executive Policy Manual* EP4.

Occasional/Limited Use

University officials may authorize occasional but limited (de minimis) personal use of state resources only if:

- If the use is not specifically prohibited or subject to qualifications and limitations noted above; and
- There is no cost to the state; and
- The use of state resources does not interfere with official duties; and
- The use is brief in duration and does not disrupt or distract from the conduct of University business due to volume or frequency; and
- The use does not compromise the security or integrity of University information or software.

University officials may authorize a personal use that promotes organizational effectiveness or enhances the job-related skills of a University employee.

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BUSINESS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

PROPERTY
20.37.3
NEW 4-01
Internal Auditor
335-2001

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REIMBURSEMENT

In general, a University employee may not make private use of state resources and then reimburse the University so there is no actual cost to the state. However, in some limited situations, such as officers or employees working at remote locations, a system of reimbursement may be appropriate. Any system of reimbursement must be established by the University in advance and must result in no cost to the state. To be valid under this rule the reimbursement system must be approved by the State Ethics Board in advance and in writing.

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES

Electronic mail, facsimile transmissions, and voice mail are technologies that may create an electronic record. An electronic record is reproducible and is therefore not private. Such records may be subject to disclosure under the public disclosure law, or may be disclosed for audit or legitimate state operational or management purposes. (WAC 292-110-010 (7))

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